



**STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES**

PO Box 45811, Olympia WA 98504-5811

DATE: January 26, 2010
TO: RFQQ #09-360 Bidders
FROM: Andrew Kramer, Procurement Coordinator
DSHS Central Contract Services
SUBJECT: Amendment #2 – Bidder Questions & DSHS Answers

- 1 Will the DSHS please consider extending the Proposal Submission Due Date from February 12, 2010 to March 1, 2010? This would allow vendors time to complete a comprehensive response to this Procurement.

DSHS Answer: DSHS shall extend the proposal submission date to March 1, 2010.

- 2 Will the DSHS please provide the current per minute rate for both TRS and CapTel if this information is considered public record?

DSHS Answer: The current rate per conversation minute for TRS is \$1.18 and for CapTel, the rate per conversation minute is \$1.61.

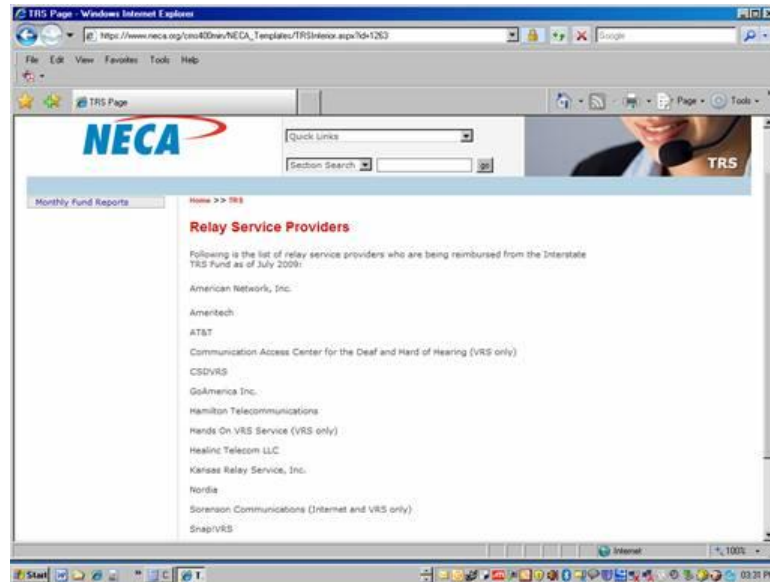
- 3 RFQQ Page 17, Section 2.8.2, Proposal Submission Format, requires Proposers to submit one electronic copy of its proposal as a native-formatted, unlocked Microsoft Word 2007 document and/or Microsoft Excel 2007 file. Will the DSHS accept the electronic copy in PDF format?

DSHS Answer: DSHS will accept an electronic copy in PDF format for the RFQQ process from all bidders. However, upon execution of the WATRS contract, Bidder's Proposal will need to be re-submitted as a native-formatted, unlocked Microsoft Word 2007 document

- 4 What toll-free number is currently associated with 711?

DSHS Answer: 800-833-6388 TTY & 800-833-6384 Voice

- 5 RFQQ Page 3, Section 1.3.2 Captioned Telephone Relay Service requires Proposers to submit an email from the NECA fund administrator stating that they are approved to receive reimbursement for interstate and 2-line captioned telephone calls. Is the following screen shot of the NECA website listing the Proposer as a Relay Service Provider acceptable as reimbursement proof?



DSHS Answer: Bidders shall submit a copy of official documentation or email correspondence from either NECA or the FCC in response to the requirement of this section of the RFQQ. The NECA website would not be an appropriate response to the RFQQ.

- 6 RFQQ Page 16, Section 2.7.9.2 states that all equipment proposed must be new equipment. This Procurement is for a service. However, equipment is used to provide the service. Requiring a Contractor to purchase new equipment to process TRS calls for the State of Washington would be extremely costly. The 2004 State of Washington Procurement for WATRS stated that the equipment proposed must be new or functionally equivalent to new equipment. Will the DSHS please consider modifying this Section?

DSHS Answer: Section 2.7.9.2 is amended to read as follows: “All equipment proposed must be new or functionally equivalent to new equipment”.

- 7 RFQQ Page 34 Section 3.4.2 1st Bullet. This Section indicates that ROs shall translate the limited typed English (or “TTY-ASL”) of TTY users into correct spoken English so that non-TTY users can understand the call and communication occurs, unless the TTY user requests verbatim. In the 2004 Answer to Primary Questions, the DSHS stated that this same Section “shall henceforth read as requiring a Verbatim rendering of what is typed and voiced, unless either or both parties specifically request Translation.” Will the DSHS consider modifying Section 3.4.2 to reflect that the default is verbatim unless Translation is requested?

DSHS Answer: Section 3.4.2, in pertinent part, is amended to require a RO to provide “verbatim rendering of what is typed and voiced, unless either or both parties specifically request Translation”.

- 8 RFQQ Page 59 Section 3.10.3 states that the “desired format for an experience matrix is below”. Will the DSHS please describe further how it desires to receive this information and provide the suggested matrix?

DSHS Answer: DSHS clarifies that the “desired format for an experience matrix” is referenced to mean the information sought in Section 3.10.3 as well as the immediate sections following Section 3.10.3, specifically Sections 3.10.4, 3.10.5, and 3.10.6.

- 9 RFQQ Page 63 Section 3.12.4.1 indicates that TRS Services pricing shall not include the cost of Relay Program Manager (RPM) Services, which must be quoted separately if offering TRS and/or CTRS. RFQQ Page 52 Section 3.7.3 indicates that the RPM position should be responsible for relay awareness and account management tasks. Can Bidders provide different solutions to providing Account Management and Outreach Services and provide detailed explanation and pricing in its Proposal?

DSHS Answer: Bidders may provide different pricing and services solutions, but they shall separately specify, either in actual dollar amounts or as a percentage of the total price, the cost of account management and Outreach services contained in every solution in which RPM Services are embedded or stand alone in Bidder's TRS Services and CTRS pricing proposals.

- 10 Attachment E Sample Contract Exhibit A Section 1 Charges. Will the DSHS revise this Section to match the Pricing scenarios offered by bidders in their proposals (see Question #9 above)?

DSHS Answer: The Sample Contract, Exhibit A, is only a "sample". DSHS will format the Charges section of the new contract to reflect all negotiated charges with the new provider.

- 11 RFQQ Page 66 Section 3.12.8 contains the same requirement that was contained in Section 5.8 of the 2004 RFQQ. Below is a Vendor question and the DSHS' Answer taken from the 2004 Answer to Primary Questions. Attachment E Sample Contract Page 12 Section 4.3 contains similar language. Will the DSHS please provide similar clarification for the current RFQQ Section 3.12.8 and Sample Contract Section 4.3?

Section 5.8 Termination of Assigned staff

It is not clear how and when the Agency may request immediate replacement of the Vendor's staff assigned to this project. It is possible that a Vendor may use a network solution in response to the requirements of the RFQQ. Under a network-type environment, there may be many people available to work on the project from time-to-time but possibly not many people assigned to the project. At what point does the Agency's request supersede the Vendor's rights of employment over its staff?

DSHS Answer: *The AGENCY's request shall in no manner be construed to supersede Vendor's rights of employment over its staff. The AGENCY is requesting that Vendors agree to consider the AGENCY's request for immediate replacement of Vendor staff and to be willing to cooperate in handling such requests. The AGENCY needs to be able to address issues of egregious misconduct or dereliction of duty by Vendor staff and subcontractors through some avenue of recourse in order to mitigate potential AGENCY liability for such misconduct or dereliction. The heading for Section 5.8 is hereby amended to read Replacement of Assigned Staff.*

DSHS Answer: Section 3.12.8 is amended to reflect DSHS' Answer in the 2004 TRS Procurement Questions and Answers and the heading shall read "Replacement of Assigned Staff".

- 12 RFQQ Page 66 Section 3.12.9 requests a detailed implementation plan for implementing WATRS by June 27, 2010; RFQQ page 13 Section 2.5 indicates August 2010; RFQQ Page 23 Section 3.1.12 indicates that start up is August 28, 2010. Will the DSHS please clarify?

DSHS Answer: DSHS clarifies that Section 3.12.9 refers to the new provider awarded the contract. The new provider will need to provide DSHS with an Implementation Plan by June 27, 2010.

Section 2.5 is amended to read in pertinent part as follows: "The period of performance of any contract resulting from this Procurement is August 28, 2010 through August 28, 2013, unless extended at the option of DSHS pursuant to terms agreed between DSHS and Contractor".

Section 3.1.12 specifically refers to the start date the new TRS provider must commence providing services in Washington State (August 28th, 2010).

- 13 RFQQ Page 68 Section 4.2.2 Overall Score Determination indicates that Section 12 of the Proposal is worth 40 Points. Are the 40 points calculated using the formula contained in Section 4.2.4.2 on Page 69? If not, what are the points for pricing?

DSHS Answer: Yes, the 40 points are calculated using the formula contained in Section 4.2.4.2.

- 14 RFQQ Attachment F Contractor Intake Form. Is the intent for Bidders to complete and return the form upon award of contract? Or does the DSHS prefer Bidders to include a completed form with its Proposal?

DSHS Answer: The Contractor Intake form is intended for new contractors and would need to be submitted to DSHS once the contract is awarded. If the incumbent WATRS provider is awarded the contract, then a Contractor Update form will need to be completed and returned to DSHS.

- 15 RFQQ Page 67 Section 4. Are suggested changes/modifications to the contract scored in any manner? If so, will the DSHS please clarify how are they evaluated?

DSHS Answer: Contract-related changes or modifications are not scored in any manner.

- 16 Attachment E Sample Contract Page 6 Section 1.54 defines Response as "Contractor's response to the RFQQ, dated February 4, 2005), as amended, and any subsequent information provided by Contractor pursuant to the Contract." Will the DSHS amend to reflect the new 2010 date?

DSHS Answer: As it was only a sample contract, there will be a new date in the final contract language.

- 17 Attachment E Sample Contract Page 31 Section 18.1.5 requires Crime Coverage of not less than \$5 Million. Since this particular contract is not a contract for hardware or software deliverables or for handling money or credit cards for the State, will the DSHS please consider reducing the coverage limits for the Crime Coverage from \$5 Million to \$1 Million which would be a more appropriate amount given the nature of the services being performed and would reduce the cost of providing the service?

DSHS Answer: DSHS will amend the Crime Coverage provision to require that Contractor secure a minimum coverage of \$1 million dollars per occurrence and \$2 million dollars aggregate.

- 18 Page 16, Section 2.7.9.2, Condition of Proposed Equipment. The requirement states that “all equipment must be new equipment”. Will the State please specify what “all equipment” entails and also whether redeployed equipment in pristine condition can be utilized for fulfillment of the contract?

DSHS Answer: See DSHS’ Answer to Question #6. In accordance therewith, as long as the equipment is new or functionally equivalent to new, DSHS permits the use of redeployed equipment. All equipment would be defined as being the RO’s station, switching system, servers, etc., and other ancillary equipment necessary to the provision of WATRS pursuant to this RFQQ and Contract specifications.

- 19 Page 17, Section 2.8.1.4, Restatement of Procurement Requirements. Please clarify “reiterating the number and text of the requirement in sequence.” Some requirements have numerous bulleted items. Normally, we would provide our response immediately following each bullet. Is this satisfactory?

DSHS Answer: Bidder’s response shall be provided below each bullet whenever applicable.

- 20 Page 21. Section 3.1.4, National TRS Access Numbers (MR). The requirement states that “Bidders shall have in place with the Local Exchange Carriers a means to access the use of nationwide (emphasis added), universal 711 or 800 number for WATRS users to access WATRS.” The current wording of this requirement is asking bidder to ensure that access to the WA TRS from anywhere in the country can be reached by 711. Will the state consider rewording this requirement to read, “Bidders shall have in place with the Local Exchange Carriers operating in the State of Washington, a means for residents in Washington to access the WATRS via 711 or 800 numbers.”

DSHS Answer: DSHS’ clarifies that Bidder must enable 711 dialing or toll-free dialing, whether initiated in the State of Washington or not, to access WATRS.

- 21 Page 22, Section 3.1.5, Washington Relay Service Telephone Numbers (MR). Please clarify what is meant by “international calling utilizing dedicated numbers shall be provided.” Is it the expectation of the state that bidder will provide a dedicated number to be used for both inbound/outbound international calling?

DSHS Answer: Yes.

- 22 Page 27, Section 3.2.12 Call Registration Capability (SR). Requirement states, “Bidder shall have a call registration method to accurately determine and record the call type for all inbound calls.” Please clarify what is meant by “call registration” and “call type.” Is “call type” intended to mean modality such as “TTY” or “Voice” or is it intended to identify all the call types mentioned in section 3.3.1?

DSHS Answer: DSHS clarifies that it requires that Bidder have a method to accurately determine and record the call type for all inbound calls. The call types for all inbound calls refer to call types mentioned in Section 3.3.1, including TTY and Voice call types.

- 23 Page 27, Section 3.2.14, Average Speed of Answer (SR). The requirement states that “no call to relay service will be answered by a recorded message for Voice or TTY. Only a continuous ringing or fast busy signal will be used.” Will the State please clarify whether Up Front Automation can be utilized to answer a call and request the forward number, creating a more efficient call process for customers?

DSHS Answer: DSHS clarifies that “Up Front Automation”, presumably a scripted macro activated on Bidder’s call routing platform, is a permissible means to “accept” a call and to request the calling number. However, DSHS further clarifies that Section 3.2.14 states: “Measurement of speed of answer shall continue until the accepted call is either abandoned or answered by a live operator ready to out-dial and relay the call.” As a result, “Up Front Automation” or an automatic macro message will not be considered as answered by a live relay operator.

- 24 Page 29, Section 3.3.1 Standard Call Types Offered for TRS (SR). Will the state please share how many “Ship to Shore” calls are handled daily, monthly or annually?

DSHS Answer: There have been no “Ship to Shore” calls processed since July 1, 2008.

- 25 Page 30, Section 3.3.4, Call Release Functionality (SR). Since the state’s RFQQ will only pay the successful bidder on conversation minutes, will the state consider rewording the requirement to read, for example, “Bidder shall also immediately release a call when a WATRS caller indicates no further assistance or calls are requested or the relay operator is unable to secure a response from the caller after 30 seconds.”

DSHS Answer: DSHS has determined that the RFQQ call release requirement (due to caller inaction after 180 seconds) is necessary to enable deaf, deaf-blind, hard of hearing, and speech disabled individuals with mobility or cognitive disabilities an opportunity to utilize WATRS effectively.

- 26 Page 30, Section 3.3.6 Carrier of Choice (COC) (SR). Is it the State’s expectation that the relay operator must ask every non-profiled user who places a toll or long distance call which carrier s/he would like to use for their call?

DSHS Answer: DSHS will not require that a RO offer COC options to a relay user that does not have COC information on their Customer Profile Database or offered directly by the caller at the time of the call.

- 27 Page 32, Section 3.3.12 Outbound International Calling (SR). Requirement states, “Bidder shall provide international call access via WATRS when the inbound caller is placing a call from inside the domestic United States”. Will the state consider changing this wording to state, “... from within the State of Washington” since the state does not have jurisdiction for services provisioned from outside the state.

DSHS Answer: DSHS amends Section 3.3.12 to read: “Bidder shall provide international call access via WATRS when the caller is placing an international call from within the State of Washington or an international inbound caller is calling into the State of Washington”.

- 28 Page 38, Section 3.4.4, STS Call Procedures (SR). The 9th bullet of the requirement indicates that providers should allow Voice customers to ask for a STS user by name rather than providing a number to dial. Will the State please verify that they are requesting Relay providers to house an internal telephone directory of STS users that can be accessed when a caller knows the STS user's name? Also, will participation in this directory be guided by a STS user's profile? Or is there an existing STS user directory that will be transferred to the selected Relay provider?

DSHS Answer: The answer to all three questions is in the affirmative. DSHS clarifies with respect to the term "STS user directory" that STS User Profile Database information will be transferred to the selected Relay Provider.

- 29 Page 50, Section 3.6.5 Landline, Cellular, and Wireless Flat Rate Calling Plans (SR). With respect to cellular and wireless flat rate calling plans, the requirement states, "bidder shall ensure that a customer having either an expanded cellular or wireless flat rate calling plan is able to place calls through WATRS without incurring any charge for the call." Given that the relay provider does not have access to wireless carriers' subscribers plans and cannot direct how the carriers' bill their subscriber's for use of the service, will the state consider removing "cellular" and "wireless" from this requirement? This would be even more challenging to do with wireless/cellular users who are roaming outside their local area.

DSHS Answer: DSHS clarifies that the intent of Section 3.6.5 is to enable customers with cellular or wireless plans to access WATRS without being charged by the relay provider for such access based on the use of a wireless or cellular device by the caller.

- 30 Page 52, Section 3.7.2, Outreach Services Provided by Washington State Non-Profit Agencies or Corporations (SR). The first sentence says "pursuant to 10.1, above". Should this be "pursuant to 3.7.1 above"? Are providers required to utilize local community agencies or non-profit organizations?

DSHS Answer: DSHS will revise language to read "pursuant to Section 3.7.1 above." DSHS clarifies that providers are not required to utilize local community agencies or non-profit organizations for outreach activities, but if they elect to do so, the plain meaning and intent of Section 3.7.2 shall apply.

- 31 Page 52, Section 3.7.3, Customer Service and Relay Program Manager (SR). Will the State consider a Relay Program Manager located in another state?

DSHS Answer: Yes.

- 32 Page 58, Section 3.10.2, Bidder information (MR). Regarding the 2nd second bullet, are names and addresses alone satisfactory?

DSHS Answer: Yes, names and addresses alone are satisfactory for purposes of bid submission only with respect to the second bullet of Section 3.10.2. The remaining bulleted subsections are still required to be provided. DSHS further clarifies that the selected Contractor will be required to furnish all the necessary detailed information sought in Section 3.10.2 if awarded a contract unless otherwise instructed.

- 33 Page 59, Section 3.10.3, Experience of Bidder (SR). This section references the desired format for an experience matrix.

DSHS Answer: See DSHS' Answer to Question #8.

- 34 Page 61, Section 3.11.4, Performance Bond (MR). When is the Performance Bond due to the State? Is a Letter of Bondability satisfactory?

DSHS Answer: A Letter of Bondability is satisfactory to DSHS. Bidder would be required to provide proof of purchase of a performance bond to DSHS at least 15 calendar days prior to the execution of the contract with DSHS. DSHS will provide the selected contractor with performance bond and insurance certification submission requirements during contract negotiations.

- 35 There are various documents requiring signatures. Are electronic signatures satisfactory?

DSHS Answer: Electronic signatures must be a facsimile of the actual signature of the signing party. However, DSHS clarifies that all contract documents will require to be submitted with original, non-electronic signatures.

- 36 Attachment B, Certifications and Assurances, Section D, #2. Are names and addresses of principal officers and Chairman of the Board of Directors satisfactory?

DSHS Answer: Furnishing the names and addresses of principal officers and of the Chairman of the Board of Directors is satisfactory to DSHS.

- 37 Would the State please provide monthly session and conversation minutes for all of 2009? Would the State also provide their calls/minute volume for Spanish Relay?

DSHS Answer: FY09 Conversation minutes are provided for both CapTel and TRS in Attachment D of the TRS RFQQ. DSHS amends the RFQQ to include session minutes and such information is appended to this Questions and Answers document. (See information in chart following Question #41).

For the one year period ending June 30, 2009, Spanish call volume was 360 calls for 1583 total minutes. No Spanish CapTel minutes have been reported.

- 38 In addition to Word or Excel, will the State be willing to accept a PDF document of the final proposal?

DSHS Answer: See DSHS' Answer to Question #3.

- 39 Due to our length of service with the State of Washington, will the State consider accepting a lower security and/or release/minimum deadline for the performance bond?

DSHS Answer: DSHS will consider negotiating a lower performance bond amount based on Bidder's performance history providing WATRS.

- 40 In Section 3.4.2 – Relay Operator Call Procedures, the second bullet under that section states: “The RO shall type to the TTY user and verbalize to the non-TTY user exactly what is said when the call is first answered and at all times during the conversation, unless the call is handled pursuant to the bulleted section above, or either party specifically requests otherwise.” To insure that a complete and compliant response is submitted, will the State please clarify specifically which “bulleted section above” is being referenced?

DSHS Answer: The “bulleted section above” is reference to the 1st bullet under Section 3.4.2.

- 41 With regard to the invoice monthly delivery date, Section 3.5.6 is a bit unclear and Section 3.5.8 states the 10th [day of the month] causing the two sections to seemingly contradict each other. Under the current contract Washington’s SLA is the 30th. Will the State please verify if the SLA of the 30th day of the month for monthly delivery of the invoice package is still acceptable?

DSHS Answer: DSHS amends the pertinent TRS RFQQ sections to read “the thirtieth (30th) of each month.”

DSHS Answer to Question #37: Session Minutes Information:

Total Session Minutes				
TRS			CapTel	
Date	Minutes		Date	Minutes
July 2008	137,181		July 2008	38,801
August 2008	128,930		August 2008	41,813
September 2008	126,413		September 2008	38,495
October 2008	130,373		October 2008	39,672
November 2008	116,599		November 2008	35,556
December 2008	147,080		December 2008	48,392
January 2009	134,892		January 2009	42,786
February 2009	114,610		February 2009	37,385
March 2009	120,526		March 2009	44,827
April 2009	112, 244		April 2009	43,445
May 2009	119,946		May 2009	43,934
June 2009	123,707		June 2009	44,366
Total	1,400,257		Total	499,472